



# News from Congressman **Tom Lantos**

**12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of California**  
**San Mateo/San Francisco**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **LANTOS LEADS 30 MEMBERS OF CONGRESS IN CRITICIZING LABOR DEPARTMENT FOR IGNORING CHILD LABOR PROTECTIONS**

***Letter to Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao  
Condemns Failure to Act on Recommendations of  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health  
on Hazardous Jobs for Children***

Washington, D.C. - Congressman Tom Lantos (D-California) today sent a letter, co-signed by thirty Members of Congress, to Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao criticizing the U.S. Department of Labor for ignoring child labor protections. In the letter, Congressman Lantos and his colleagues urge the Department to implement immediately the recommendations of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to update the Department's Hazardous Orders to protect children from dangerous jobs.

"Every year, approximately 230,000 children under the age of 18 are injured on the job, and nearly 70 children each year die from their job-related injuries. Unbelievably, children are employed today to drive chainsaws, drive tractors, work on construction sites, and to perform other dangerous jobs that too often lead to grievous injuries. This is an outrage and must be stopped," Congressman Lantos said in sending the letter.

"Many of these injuries could be prevented with common sense changes to child labor regulations, including the Department of Labor's Hazardous Orders. Over six months ago, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health recommended to the Department that it update its Hazardous Orders to prevent children from being hired to perform dangerous jobs. But the Department of Labor has yet to act on these recommendations. My letter to Secretary Chao, co-signed by thirty of my colleagues, urges her to implement the recommendations immediately. Every day the Department of Labor delays action is another day that children are needlessly placed in harm's way," Congressman Lantos said.

The letter to Secretary Chao concludes that "the Department [of Labor] has decided to ignore the NIOSH recommendations," and that "inaction is inexcusable." "Surely you must agree that the Department cannot stand idly by as children are injured while working in jobs that require hazardous activities...We are requesting a copy of the Labor Department's prioritization of the NIOSH recommendations, including a proposed timeline for rulemaking,"

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